

Turning the page

“Stand up and walk out of your history.”-- Phil McGraw.

I'm a sentimental person. I'm one of those people who love looking back on photographs, one of those people who sigh in nostalgia when they turn the pages of an old diary. All of us sentimental beings seize the emotions that keep us going, and hold them in a crushing, suffocating embrace. But what happens when your time with something is up? What happens when a loved one just-disappears, like a lone leaf on a barren tree, caught up in a gust of autumn wind? We don't want to move on. We want to savour the words in that chapter a little more. However we cannot stay in the past forever, and this is something that I realised from a very painful personal experience-when I witnessed how damaging it can be to hold on to something even after it is gone.

My best friend's cousin passed away last year. She comes from a family where cold, civil conversations start the day and a dinner table set for one is the norm. Her parents avoid talking to one another as much as possible and as a result, tend to neglect her when they avoid the house altogether. Her cousin was the only one she felt close to, the only one in the world whom she felt truly understood her. With her pillar of support gone, my best friend crumbled into despair. Depression had her in its grasp, and she refused to accept the idea of her cousin lost to her forever.

The situation soon escalated. My best friend started to toy with the idea of suicide and that was when I realised the severity of the situation. She was lost in her grief and withering before my eyes-and there was nothing I could do. Finally, I gathered a few friends and together, we managed to coax her out of the idea.

It has been a year, and my best friend is getting better, but she has not moved on.

I believe that letting go is not forgetting. Letting go is fighting on and living on. Letting go is the first step to healing. We all have memories we never want to part with, but we have to say goodbye one day.

To me, life is like a book-with chapters and characters and interweaving stories. There comes a time when you have to start on a new page, regardless of how beautiful the last chapter was. Moving on is accepting, and growing, because while others may drop out of the trek of life, why should you? Your legs still work. You can still run.

My best friend is still lingering in a chapter she finished a long time ago. I wish I could help her, lead her back on the right path, but it is not my place. Only she can let it go.

We all have to let go someday-turn around and start on the long, winding road ahead. This is because, just like a book, you can always look back on the pages before. However, sooner or later, we have to find out what happens next, and turn the page.

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We have to stand up, walk out of our history, and continue living the present-this I believe.